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Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

Mike and Katrina Schueller play with their sons Connor, 3, and Carter, 10 months, in the living room of their home near Kingsley. The Schuellers will officially adopt Carter today during Adoption Day at the new Robert P. Griffin Hall of Justice on Washington Street in Traverse City. Both boys are from South Korea.

Fourth annual Adoption Day is today

BY VICTOR SKINNER

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TRAVERSE CITY — Thanksgiving week is especially significant for Mike and Katrina Schueller.

The Kingsley couple is adopting their second son in three years today and will have plenty to appreciate come Thanksgiving day.

"We feel truly blessed to have our two boys," Katrina Schueller said. "Adoption is a great way to start your family, add to your family or complete your family."

That's exactly what proponents say Michigan Adoption Day is all about — showcasing the

important role adoption can play in the lives of children and families.

The Schuellers formally adopted their first son Connor, 3, at the second Michigan Adoption Day in 2004. Their second son Carter, 10 months, will be one of 26 children whose adoptions will be finalized today at the fourth annual event.

This year's Michigan Adoption Day will be the largest yet for Grand Traverse County and includes both international and domestic adoptions of children ranging from infants to teens, said Family Court Judge David Stowe, who is finalizing the adoptions.

"Adoptions for me as a family court judge is far and away the most enjoyable part of my job," Stowe said. "To be able to finalize this many adoptions in a community this size speaks volumes about the kind of persons that live here that truly care about the well-being of children."

The Schuellers adopted their sons from South Korea through Bethany Christian Services.

"We went several years trying to conceive on our own and had no luck," Katrina Schueller said. "We knew we wanted be parents. We wanted to have kids and ethnicity didn't matter to us."

Stowe hopes stories like the Schuellers' will inspire other families.

"These are loving decisions by adoptive parents that will pay dividends in the future because the kids will grow and develop into positive productive citizens with bright futures," Stowe said. "Spotlighting adoption day might strike a chord with other potential adoptive parents in considering adoption as an option."

The event, co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court and the Grand Traverse-Leenanau Department of Human Services, will take place at 11:45 a.m. on the second floor of the new Robert P. Griffin Hall of Justice on Washington Street.

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